



# **NCDHHS COVID-19 Child Care Response Updates**

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# Introductions



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State Child Care Nurse Consultant, NCDHHS

# Agenda for Today



- Phases of Reopening
- Reopening & Updated Payment Policies
- Updates to Health and Safety Guidance
- Moderated Q&A

# **Phases of Reopening**

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# Phase 1 (May 8 – May 22, 2020)

## GENERAL

- Stay At Home order remains in place, people can leave home for commercial activity
- Those retailers and services will need to implement social distancing, cleaning, and other protocols
- Gatherings limited to no more than 10 people (child care can have more than 10 because it is an essential business)
- Face coverings recommended in public
- Encourage continued teleworking

## CHILD CARE

- Child care facilities may be open only if they operate in full compliance with NCDHHS guidelines
- Child care programs can now serve:
  - Children of anyone who performs work on behalf of a business or operation that is not closed by Executive Order
  - Children of anyone who is leaving home to seek employment
  - Children who are receiving child welfare services
  - Children who are homeless or in unstable living environments

## Phase 2 (Starting May 22, 2020)

- The Stay at Home order will be lifted, and North Carolina moves to a Safer at Home recommendation, especially for vulnerable populations
  - Restaurants will be able to reopen to 50% capacity and other requirements
  - Salons and personal care will be able to reopen to 50% capacity and other requirements
  - Pools will be able to reopen to 50% capacity and other requirements
  - Mass gathering limits is updated to no more than 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors (note, this limit does not apply to child care settings)
  - **Child care may be fully open to serve all children but must continue to meet NCDHHS Guidelines**
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## Phase 3 (At least 4-6 weeks after Phase 2)

- Lessen restrictions for vulnerable populations with encouragement to practice social distancing
  - Allow increased capacity at restaurants, bars, other businesses, houses of worship, and entertainment venues
  - Further increase number of people allowed at gatherings
  - Continue rigorous restrictions on nursing homes and congregant care settings
  - **Child care may be fully open but must continue to meet NCDHHS Guidelines**
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# **Reopening & Updated Payment Information**



# Reopening Application

- DCDEE launched [COVID-19 Child Care Provider Reopening Application](#)
- Any provider who was closed prior to May 8<sup>th</sup> and plans to reopen must submit the Reopening Application at least 48 hours before reopening date
- Child Care Consultants will:
  - Reach out to you to discuss your plan to meet health and safety guidelines
  - Issue a “Health and Safety Certificate” which you should post
  - Start making consultation visits
- Providers do not need to reapply if they already completed the Emergency Child Care Provider application

# Reopening Application

## COVID-19 Child Care Provider Reopening Application

Please use this form if you are the owner of a North Carolina child care facility that is willing to meet the requirements outlined below to reopen after May 8, 2020.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) recognizes the need to reopen safe, developmentally appropriate child care for working families in North Carolina. Given the implications and potential risks of COVID-19, the state is reopening through a three-phase approach and is exercising additional precautions to protect the health and safety of children, families, and staff and ensure child care programs adhere to public health protections to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

North Carolina has authorized that all child care programs can reopen as of May 11, 2020 under new, [emergency health and safety guidelines](#). All licensed/regulated Child Care Center/Family Child Care providers who have submitted their application in advance of reopening to demonstrate compliance to these new regulations.

The Division of Child Development and Early Education Regulatory Services Branch will review your application and determine if you are eligible to reopen.

After submitting your application:

- Your child care consultant will reach out to you to discuss your plan to meet the updated health and safety requirements and have about reopening.
- You will receive an email from DCDEE with a sign indicating that your facility has been approved to meet the updated health and safety requirements. You should post this sign at your facility while the current emergency regulations are in effect. (Note: All providers who have indicated that their facility has been approved; DCDEE will provide signs to those providers who already have signs posted in April 2020.)

We recommend providers submit the Child Care Provider Reopening Application at least 48 hours in advance of their desired reopening date. Providers who do not receive approval from DCDEE to reopen will not be allowed to reopen or be approved to provide child care services.

Emergency Child Care Provider Application Step by Step Instructions

• **Required Fields**

### I. Facility Information

1. **License Number \***

**LINK:**

<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/What-s-New/Coronavirus-Information-for-Child-Care/COVID-19-Child-Care-Provider-Reopening-Application>

### II. Declaration:

I understand that by confirming I will meet the following conditions, my facility will meet the requirements to reopen:

• **You must agree to each and all declarations to continue.**

- ☐ • My facility will adhere to [updated NC DHHS interim coronavirus disease 2019 guidelines for health, screening, and safety](#) and comply with all [interim policy and regulatory flexibilities](#).
- ☐ • My facility has adequate staffing to comply with licensing requirements and implement [updated NC DHHS interim coronavirus disease 2019 guidelines for health, screening, and safety](#).
- ☐ • My facility has adequate supplies and resources to implement updated interim coronavirus disease 2019 guidelines for health, screening, and safety. Adequate supplies and resources include, but are not limited to: proper resources for conducting daily screenings and daily health checks; handwashing stations with soap and water; paper towels; proper disinfectants; and lined trash cans.
- ☐ • My facility has adequate resources to care for children (e.g., diapers, wipes, food).
- ☐ • My facility will update current vacancy and staffing information on a daily basis using the online [COVID-19 Child Care Provider Survey](#).
- ☐ • My facility will waive all child care subsidy parent co-payments during the months indicated by DCDEE. I understand that NC DHHS will cover the parent co-payments during these months.
- ☐ • My facility will provide teachers and staff with bonus pay at no less than amount funded by DCDEE, at the time of the regular payroll during the COVID-19 crisis through the month of May. These bonus pay amounts are explained in the [Payment Policy](#).
- ☐ • If, at any time, my facility is unable to meet the requirements described in this document that I will immediately notify my facility's licensing consultant.

# Reopening Application – Declarations

- ☐ Meet [updated health and safety guidance](#)
- ☐ Have adequate staffing to meet health and safety guidance
- ☐ Have adequate supplies and resources to conduct daily screenings and health checks (e.g., handwashing stations with soap, water, paper towels, proper disinfectants, lined trash cans)
- ☐ Have adequate resources to care for children (e.g., diapers, wipes, food)
- ☐ Update [daily provider survey](#) to report attendance/vacancy info and open/closed status
- ☐ Waive subsidy parent copayments
- ☐ Provide bonus pay to teachers and staff (funded by DCDEE) through May
- ☐ Notify consultant if you cannot meet requirements

# Operational Grants for Open Programs

- Monthly grants to child care providers that have been open during the COVID-19 pandemic or reopen in the near future (April, May, and June)
  - Intended to help cover monthly fixed costs to support programs that have lost significant revenues as a result of COVID-19
  - Funding is a grant, not a loan
  - Available to all open programs, regardless of whether you received subsidy in the past
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# Operational Grants for Open Programs

- Grants for child care centers will range \$500 to \$30,000 per month
- Grants for FCC homes will range \$359 to \$2,500.
- Operational Grant amounts were determined based on several program factors:
  - Total number of children served prior to COVID-19
  - Star level
  - Serving children and families receiving child care subsidy in past 12 months
  - Subsidy density (the percentage of children enrolled in your program receiving child care subsidy)
  - Infant-toddler enrollment

# Operational Grants for Open Programs

- Child care programs will receive grants if they:
  - Submitted an Emergency Child Care Provider Application in April OR submit a Reopening Application in May, AND
  - Indicated they were open on the Daily Provider Survey
- Programs will not need to apply for operational grants, they will receive the following payments:
  - Programs open in April will receive a combined grant for April and May (two months' worth of grants) in mid-May
  - Programs reopening in May will receive a combined grant for May and June (two months' worth) in mid-June
  - Programs reopening in June will receive a grant for one month in mid-July
- To find out your exact operational grant amount, you can email [dcdee.communications@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:dcdee.communications@dhhs.nc.gov) or call 919-703-5262.

# Child Care Subsidy Program

APRIL AND MAY

- Paying subsidy payments based on February enrollment for all providers
- Covering parent copayments for all providers (do not collect parent fees)

JUNE

- Paying subsidy payments based on February enrollment for open providers
- Covering parent copayments for open providers (do not charge parent fees)

# Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program

- Served over 17,000 children of essential workers in April
  - Because Executive Order 138 removes the “essential business” designation, providers cannot enroll new children in emergency subsidy after May 8<sup>th</sup>
  - Providers will continue to receive emergency subsidy through end of May for children who were enrolled prior to May 8<sup>th</sup> (DCDEE will issue payment in mid-June based on May attendance)
  - Emergency Child Care Subsidy program will end May 31<sup>st</sup>
  - Please notify parents that the Emergency Subsidy program is ending and advise to apply for regular subsidy if they need continued financial support
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# Bonus Payments for Employees

- DCDEE will issue bonus payments (for April and May only) to teachers and staff who were physically on-site at open programs.
  - Full-time employees: \$950/month for teachers, and \$525/month
  - Part-time employees receive half those amounts
- Programs will receive 10% payment on top of bonus payments in April and May to cover costs associated with payroll taxes and other administrative/overhead costs.
- All teachers and staff in programs that are currently open or reopen will receive bonus payments through May – this includes programs that open during May.
- Providers must submit attendance through [Provider Portal](#) to receive bonus payments

# Child Care Hotline

- Hotline will continue to operate to connect families to local care options near them.
  - Number is 1-888-600-1685.
  - Open weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Care options are available for infants through age 12.
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# **Updates to Health and Safety Guidance**

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# Child Care Health and Safety Guidance

- Review the [updated health and safety guidance](#)
- Post updated door sign at your facility ([English](#), [Spanish](#))
- Identify your county [child care health consultant](#)
- Visit the [NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center](#) for additional resources and guidance
  - [Using cloth face coverings safely](#)

# Daily Symptom Screening

## Symptoms of COVID-19

- fever\*
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Additional symptoms include chills, new loss of taste or smell, and vomiting/diarrhea (children only). While symptoms in children are similar to adults, **children may have milder symptoms.**

\*Fever is determined by a thermometer reading 100.4 or higher or by subjective signs such as flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, chills, shivering, sweating, achiness, headache, not eating or drinking.

# Updates to Health Guidance

- At arrival and drop-off, staff should discourage congregation (social distancing should be practiced at all times)
  - Limit the use of teachers that move from classroom to classroom (“floaters”)
  - Allow for flexible sick leave/paid leave policies that allow people to stay home when sick
  - Signage, 6 feet spacing markings at waiting areas
  - Increase circulation of outdoor air if possible
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# Updates to Health Guidance

- Cleaning guidelines
  - Re-opening/daily cleaning: Routine cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting
- Facilities that are reopening after extended closure:
  - Train staff on health guidance and screening procedures
  - Communicate with families
  - Confirm there are enough supplies of bleach, paper towels, soap, gloves, cloth face coverings, and thermometers.
- If there is a potential exposure or suspected case, contact your local health department, child care health consultant, and environmental health specialist

# Cloth Face Coverings (CFCs)

- When feasible, staff members should wear CFCs:
  1. Inside the facility
  2. When unable to maintain six feet distance outdoors
- Consider face coverings for children over the age of 2 if they can reliably wear, remove, and handle masks
  - No face coverings for those under the age 2 because of suffocation risk
- Ensure proper use, removal, and cleaning of cloth face coverings
- Follow CDC Guidance for wearing cloth face coverings.



# Q&A, and Resources

- [All Child Care Guidance](#)
- [Reopening Application](#)
- [Daily Provider Survey](#) (open providers should complete every day)
- [Updated Health and Safety Guidance](#) **(Revised May 22)**
- [Provider Portal](#) (to submit attendance for bonus payments and emergency subsidy):
- [Payment Policies](#)
- [Child Care Health Consultant List](#)
- [Child Care Provider FAQ](#)



# THANK YOU!